DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 308 631 EA 021 136

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TITLE Alternative Incentive Programs for School Based Reform.
PUB DATE Mar 89
NOTE 22p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (San Francisco, CA, March 27-31, 1989).
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Career Ladders; *Educational Change; Elementary Secondary Education; *Incentives; *State Action; Student Needs; *Teacher Improvement; Teaching Load
IDENTIFIERS *Extended Contracts; *Tennessee

ABSTRACT

"First wave" educational reform has resulted in various state and local incentive and pay-for-performance programs, such as Tennessee's career ladder program offering extended contract opportunities for teachers and administrators achieving a certain performance status. While the intent was to reward excellence, offer supplemental pay through additional employment opportunities, and allow teachers to focus on students' special needs, the present extended contract program did not prove to be an incentive for excellent performance. In response to educator dissatisfaction, the Tennessee General Assembly called for a reexamination of the career ladder program and for development of methods for enhancing extended contract activities. Based on the 1987 study's findings, the 1988 legislation advocated that all future extended contract efforts focus directly on meeting student needs and indirectly on developing appropriate incentives for educators. State directives also charged the study team to explore alternative incentive programs for teachers, schools, and school systems. This report includes the methodology, findings, and recommendations of the 1988 career ladder study as related to extended contracts and alternative incentives; the methodology, findings, and recommendations of the 1988 career study considering alternative options; and the guidelines for alternative incentive programs to be implemented during 1989-90. The 1988 study discloses research on types of incentives (intrinsic and extrinsic) and unit size (individual, group, and organization). The alternative incentive study recommended: (1) expanding the local educational agency's role; (2) developing an integrated approach; (3) capitalizing on intrinsic incentives; and (4) providing a variety of incentives. (43 references) (MLH)

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ALTERNATIVE INCENTIVE PROGRAMS FOR SCHOOL BASED REFORM

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Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting
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American Educational Research Association

March 27-31, 1989
San Francisco, California

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INTRODUCTION

In attempting to address the national educational concerns of the 1980s, the "first wave" of reform has resulted in a number of actions that have been aimed at ensuring the quality of the teaching profession and holding schools accountable for their outcomes. There has been greater centralization of control over teachers' standards, curricula, performance evaluation, and graduation requirements. This centralization has resulted in various incentive and pay for performance programs administered at both state and local levels. Control and regulation have been hallmarks of the first wave of reform.

Tennessee's Comprehensive Educational Reform Act of 1984 and its widely publicized Career Ladder Program were consistent with the first wave of reform. A major component of the Career Ladder Program provided extended contract opportunities as incentives to teachers and administrators who had successfully completed the performance evaluation process and achieved Career Level II or III (CL II, III) status. The intent was to reward excellence and to offer teachers and administrators additional employment opportunities that would give them supplemental pay and also allow them to focus on special needs of students.

The documented perception was that the current Extended Contract Program was not an incentive for excellent performance. Teachers and administrators did receive supplemental pay, but in many cases educators were not appropriately rewarded for performance, excellence was not encouraged, and teachers were stressed from coping with the demands of their regular teaching assignment and from meeting the extended contract demands. Dissatisfaction was expressed by educators regarding many aspects of extended contract activities.

In addressing the perceived dissatisfaction, the 95th General Assembly passed a resolution in April of 1987 directing the State Board of Education and the State Department of Education (SDE) to study methods for enhancing Extended Contract Programs. A project team under the direction of Jerry J. Bellon, a professor at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, was appointed by Commissioner Charles Smith to conduct a study of the Career Ladder Program. A major component of the study was to respond to the extended contract program resolution. The findings and recommendations of the 1987 study were presented to the Commissioner in January, 1988. New legislation for 1989-90 was proposed and passed based on the recommendations of the study.

The 1988 legislation related to extended contract activities was based on the position that all future efforts should focus directly on meeting student needs and indirectly on developing

appropriate incentives for educators. Directives from the Commissioner of Education also charged the study team to explore possible alternative incentive programs for teachers, schools, and school systems. The effort is to design a program that will incorporate what is known to be rewarding to educators into a structure that will increase aspirations of excellence, efficacy, and satisfaction. Guidelines and recommendations for implementing Alternative Incentive Programs beginning in 1989-90 will be developed from this study. It is expected that Alternative Incentive Programs can, in the near future, have a significant impact on the practice and conditions of teaching in Tennessee.

This presentation focuses on incentives to educators and is a part of a larger study. This report includes the methodology, findings and recommendations of the 1987 Career Ladder Study as related to extended contract and alternative incentives; the methodology, findings and recommendations of the 1988 Career Ladder Study focusing on alternative incentive options; and the guidelines for Alternative Incentive Programs to be implemented during the 1989-90 school year.

The 1987 Career Ladder Study

Methodology

The component of the larger study that addressed the Extended Contract Program was based on two questions: what are the beneficial and detrimental aspects of the present Extended Contract Program? and what are possible alternative incentives that can encourage levels of excellent performance in educators? The extensive search of merit pay, pay for performance, career ladder programs, and incentive programs guided the study. The search included the existing literature base as well as unpublished documents, working papers, and training manuals for related programs. Perspectives were sought from program designers and experts in fields related to specific programs through correspondence and interviews. Data were collected from Tennessee educators. Interviews were conducted with six hundred teachers and one hundred administrators to assess their perceptions about the Extended Contract Program and possible incentive options. Content analysis procedures were followed in synthesizing and analyzing the data. An Advisory Committee, composed of teachers, administrators, a school board member, State Department of Education representatives, and teacher organization representatives, was actively involved in

providing information and suggestions that helped guide the work of the study team.

Findings Regarding Extended Contract

Eighty-two of Tennessee's one hundred forty-five school systems participated in the Extended Contract Program. Within those systems, 75%-80% of the eligible educators (teachers and administrators) chose to participate. Categories of activities included professional development, instruction or training of other teachers, student instruction, mentoring, planning, teacher center staffing, and parental involvement programs. Most teacher activities were summer school teaching, tutoring and remediation, extra courses, and enrichment programs. Other approved activities included curriculum development, development of instructional materials, and office tasks. Some of the activities focused on meeting teacher and school needs rather than on addressing student deficiencies.

Study participants identified beneficial and detrimental outcomes of the Extended Contract Program. The most often expressed positive outcomes were the extra services provided to students (some which would have been impossible without extended contract funding) and opportunities for educators to earn additional money. Negative outcomes included the amount of work; the time commitment; and the conflict, tension, and jealousy created within faculties and systems and across systems within the state. It was also noted that the local administration of extended contract activities is not a uniform process which also contributes to the perceived inequity.

Findings Regarding Incentive Programs

Twenty-seven states were identified during the literature review as having incentive programs that required the performance of extra duties. Seven states had incentive programs exclusive of career ladder programs. A strong trend toward incentive programs (such as mentoring, expanded job responsibilities, staff differentiation, and school-based rewards) and away from career ladders was identified.

Study respondents were generally unaware of existing or potential incentives. Participants' suggestions, such as across the board pay raises, reduced workloads and class size, and release time for school visitations, had little to do with formal incentive programs. Tennessee educators in

this study apparently did not expect to be offered incentives that are present in other states.

Recommendations of the 1987 Study

Based on the findings of the study and input from the Advisory Committee, the following recommendations related to extended contracts and developing incentives were proposed.

1. Needs assessments to identify student needs and to determine goals which will give direction to Extended Contract Programs and other support programs should be conducted by local education agencies (LEAs).
2. Opportunity for extended contracts should be open to all educators with priority given to CL II and III teachers.
3. Incentive programs should be established that meet needs not currently being addressed.
4. A process for allocating funds should be determined that provides greater support for systems that are less fiscally able while providing continued monetary support to the fiscally stronger systems.
5. Possible alternative incentive programs that could involve individual teachers, all faculty members at a school site, groups of teachers working together, or system wide efforts should be further explored.

THE 1988 STUDY

Methodology

Recommendations of the 1987 study enumerated questions regarding incentives to be addressed in the 1988 study. These were: what incentive programs currently exist in Tennessee school systems? and what should be the structure of Tennessee's incentive program? A more focused search of the literature on incentives continued to guide the study. A questionnaire was developed to elicit necessary information. Each school system (N=145) had the opportunity to participate in the study. One hundred ten systems returned the completed questionnaire. Interviews were originally planned, however results of the questionnaires revealed a lack of

knowledge related to incentive programs. At this point a decision was made to eliminate the interviews. The 1987 Advisory Committee continued to serve by providing advice and guidance.

Findings

From the questionnaire data, it was found that eleven systems currently support incentives for teachers with five having incentives for administrators. Incentives included sabbatical leave, tuition reimbursement for college courses (particularly for math, science, and special education), tuition waivers for children of educators, inservice credit for service to the system, opportunity to apply for federal funds, support to administrators to attend national conventions/meetings, and free dinners to reward perfect attendance.

The incentives that are currently offered in Tennessee are minimal. They exist in scattered locations and are available to only a few individuals. Many of the opportunities for teachers are limited to specific content areas. Some of the incentives described are available to any educator who fits into a specific category without reference to effort or ability. There is no evidence of a planned incentive system that could motivate educators to change their behavior.

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION FROM THE LITERATURE

Incentives have been mandated in many states and districts without a clear understanding of the factors that motivate teachers or of the effect these programs have on school and classroom cultures. Often there is no clear connection between the stated goals of an incentive plan and the outcomes of the program.

Flannelly and Palaich (1985) caution policy makers about implementing programs before they study the literature, ". . . incentives will not be effective unless they are based on an understanding of what motivates teachers" (p. 5). The following summary of the research will serve as the basis for alternative incentive programs in Tennessee.

Incentives and Rewards

Confusion about the relationship between rewards and incentives is evident in the literature. Often the two terms have been used synonymously despite obvious differences in their meanings. Rewards are given in return for an accomplishment or for a personal quality. Usually the reward has a monetary value. However, some rewards are symbolic. A reward is usually received after the fact. A person may or may not anticipate getting it. Even though teachers participate in an activity the reward may come as a surprise.

For a reward to become an incentive, it has to have the power to get teachers to change their behavior. Mitchell et al. (1987) clarify the difference between rewards and incentives.

> . . . while the term *reward* focuses on the pleasures or satisfactions gained from an activity or experience, the word *incentive* refers to the fact that contemplating access to those satisfactions leads people to modify their behavior in order to secure rewards and avoid punishments (p. 23).

The amount of pleasure or satisfaction produced is called reward value. Incentive value refers to how much the reward actually modifies behavior. When teachers place a high value on the feelings generated then the reward may have potential for becoming an incentive. In other words, teachers would be willing to change their behavior over a period of time to experience the pleasure or satisfaction the reward will bring.

Anticipating or contemplating the reward is crucial to understanding the way incentives function. If the incentive is attractive enough, or has enough incentive value, teachers may be motivated to change their behavior. They no longer just participate; instead they work to perform effectively, and they buy into the program (Mitchell et al., 1987, p. 24-25).

Rewards become incentives only when teachers associate the reward with modification of their actions. If teachers can not make this connection, the reward has no power to change behavior. When the evaluation system is not dependable or when political activity or favoritism enters into identification of the recipients, the reward loses incentive power.

Effective performance cannot be a short term effort. There must be a commitment to long term, persistent efforts to improve. Another consideration involves commitment to school and organizational goals. It is not enough for individual teachers to alter their own behaviors so that they improve discrete teaching skills in their own classes. To make a significant difference these changes must be planned to accomplish school and organizational goals. Making a commitment to program goals involves developing a sense of responsibility for the activities designed to achieve those goals.

Types of Incentives

Extrinsic incentives. Any incentive that has material, tangible, or monetary value; or that can be easily translated into dollars is an extrinsic incentive. These awards may include fringe benefits, fee waiver programs, paid sabbatical leave, tuition reimbursement, and incentive bonuses given for accepting assignments in difficult or highly needed areas (Ohio Department of Education, 1988). It is clear that these are important to teachers especially as an influence on choosing teaching as a career. Many young people who value a high salary find that education is not an appropriate career choice. The fact that teaching salaries have increased steadily since the early twentieth century has had little effect on teacher satisfaction. Improvements in salary may be short term satisfiers. After a time teachers find that the increase still does not make them economically competitive. At this point the salary again becomes a dissatisfier. According to Smith (1983),

> Factors tied to work content, including achievement, intrinsic interest in the work, and growth -- contribute positively to job satisfaction, while extrinsic factors -- such as salary, status, security, company policy, and interpersonal relationships contribute, not to job satisfaction but to job dissatisfaction if they are not adequate (p. 23).

Teachers appear to have mixed feelings about salary. The results of a study conducted in Texas are typical of these contradictory feelings. The teachers rated security provided by their salaries as the number one negative factor. When asked to rate potential rewards of teaching as a career, money was third behind desire to work with young people and the satisfaction that this provides (Johnson & Riches, 1987, p. 5).

Salary may have different incentive value for specific groups of teachers. One of the mistakes reformers have made is viewing all teachers as one unit. Dunwell (1987) reports,

> Along with the general public and state legislatures, many persons tend to regard teachers as a homogeneous group, with similar likes and dislikes, influenced by the same satisfiers and dissatisfiers, affected in the same ways by the same set of extrinsic motivators (p. 89).

The value of a salary raise may be significant for those who are just starting a career and for educators who are the sole support of their family unit. In the later stages of their careers these

same teachers may not find that a change in salary is as important to them. Dunwell (1987) reports that motivational levels relate to the individual's psychological, security, and achievement needs. These differences are also based on race, age, sex, and position (p. 89).

In addition, extrinsic rewards may have symbolic rather than economic value. The symbolic value of salary has been identified. Mitchell et al. (1987) state,

> . . . whatever value salary levels may have in affecting the willingness of young people to enter the teaching profession, securing high performance once they have taken a teaching job is a very different matter. In shaping job performance, salary money appears to have more symbolic than economic value. In their study of long-standing merit pay systems, Murnane and Cohen (1984) note that teachers frequently view merit pay increases as public recognition of strong performance -- rather than as a motivating force for the performance itself. Low teacher salaries may be more a symbol of low esteem than economic incentives for reduced performance. The primary message may be that teachers are not valued by society -- and their salaries, particularly, show it (p. 3).

Extrinsic rewards can motivate teachers to improve performance for a short time. There is little evidence, however, that monetary incentives have the power to support long term changes. If a monetary reward is expected to change behavior it must be sizable. These rewards have incentive value only if they are capable of producing personal pleasure, satisfaction, or fulfillment (Mitchell et al., 1987, p. 187).

Overreliance on extrinsic incentives may damage teachers' capacity to get satisfaction from intrinsic incentives. When this happens teachers are less motivated to perform effectively. When the reward is part of an incentive pay plan such as a career ladder there are additional problems to solve. According to Cellio and Jacobi (1987),

> Most education experts view merit pay plans, career ladders, and other individual salary incentive programs as lacking in overall efficacy, especially in improving instruction in all classes for all students, which should certainly be the primary goal of any school system. . .
>
> In summary, salary incentives reward a few, often arbitrarily, and do little to spur others to greater efforts. They can foster jealousy and pettiness, reduce self-esteem, affect professional relationships in negative ways. They are often neither reliable nor valid in measuring the accomplishment of school goals and objectives (p. 71-72).

Mitchell et al. (1987) advise policymakers regarding the usefulness of extrinsic incentives. "Although extrinsic rewards . . . play a significant role in motivating teachers -- especially in their recruitment and retention -- they cannot be expected to produce intense engagement or high performance (p. 213).

Intrinsic incentives. Intrinsic incentives are inherent in the nature of teaching. They are the result of personal values and feelings that are linked to participation in teaching itself. These incentives are not dependent on the action of peers or organizations since they are experienced immediately by the person involved. Teachers gain satisfaction from student achievement, interaction with students, feeling that they have made a difference in the lives of the young people they work with, and from working with other professionals to design or implement instructional programs.

Mitchell et al. (1987) found that teachers feel that their work is "most rewarding when they can attribute to themselves responsibility for improving the *achievement* level of their students" (p. 13). This incentive, evidence of student achievement, has more power to change teacher behavior than any other factor. It makes teachers feel that they are productive and can make a difference. Some teachers experience this feeling when a group of students improve their test scores. Others are as motivated when a single student responds to their instruction. In either case, student achievement has high incentive value.

Making a difference in the lives of young people is also a strong incentive. McCloskey (1987) found that teachers are concerned not only with cognitive achievement, but also with affective factors such as reaching students, helping them develop as individuals, and developing productive attitudes and motivation. Reform efforts tend to focus only on the cognitive aspects of teaching. McCloskey says, "Students are not viewed as people to be helped to develop as individuals, but rather as a cohort of persons to be challenged to achieve by reform" (p. 29). The personal relationships of students and teachers have incentive value. Appreciation, enthusiasm, and sharing of ideas is one of the motivating factors inherent when teachers work with youngsters.

Satisfaction may come from working productively with peers. For most teachers this opportunity is rare. Many teachers have only occasional contact with other adults. Except for a free period in the secondary schools, teachers have few opportunities to have any substantive conversation with their colleagues (Cresap, 1984). There are potential opportunities for teachers to work together as they design programs or write curriculum. Participation in staff development

activities that involve peer coaching or opportunities to learn from other teachers is another opportunity for interaction. Mitchell et al. (1987) studied some teachers who were motivated by the opportunity to work with co-workers in developing and implementing programs for instructional improvement. These teachers saw the other adults as an important influence. The opportunity to work with others made them more eager to invest effort in new programs and to experiment with new behaviors.

Intrinsic incentive programs. School systems have designed incentive programs to capitalize or encourage intrinsic satisfaction. One program allows teachers to pursue special projects that will improve learning. Others provide sabbaticals for retraining or recertification, encourage attendance at professional meetings, involve teachers in curriculum projects, and provide staff development. If teachers believe that participating in these programs will improve teaching and learning, the programs will have incentive value.

A second type of program is designed to remove barriers to effective classroom teaching. These might include reductions in nonacademic intrusions on class time, ways of handling chronically disruptive students, and eliminating trivial curriculum requirements (Cresap, 1984). Changes of this type work in two ways. They respond to the teachers' perception that their work is hampered by discipline problems and intrusions on teaching time. In addition, eliminating disruptions and negative students may promote more student achievement which is the number one incentive for many teachers.

A third type of program is designed to improve working conditions. It is clear that the conditions in which teachers work can have a positive or negative effect on teaching and learning. The possibilities for improving working conditions are almost limitless (Cresap, 1984). Improving working conditions may include more planning time, high quality textbooks or materials, and comfortable offices or work areas (Ohio Department of Education, 1988). Other programs have recommended reduction of non-teaching duties. This could be accomplished by providing clerical and support personnel (Cellio and Jacobi, 1987).

Schaffardzick et al. (1985) consider the improvement of working conditions to be one of the most promising available incentives. Teachers often enter teaching out of a desire to serve and may consider working conditions to be more important than money. Improvements in working conditions are not threatening to either educators or their organizations. In addition, districts with a reputation for treating teachers well generally have had more success in attracting and keeping good teachers.

One type of career ladder focuses on the redesign of the work of teaching. Teachers in these ladders have different roles and enhanced responsibilities, different pay, more power over decisions, supervision of novices, and opportunities for advancement (Hart, 1987).

Many teachers feel that teaching is not recognized as a real profession. Duttweiler (1986) notes, "(m)embers of true professions have decision-making power, they regulate and police themselves, and accept responsibility for the decisions they make." To overcome this perception outstanding teachers may be encouraged to participate in decision making at the building or system level. This opportunity to be involved in educational policy has incentive value for teachers. It gives them professional status and provides enhanced responsibilities that help to eliminate the flatness of the career. Corcoran et al. (1988) report the results of several studies:

> Teachers express greater job satisfaction and believe they are more effective when they are permitted to exercise professional judgment and choice over matters that have direct impact on the classroom, such as organizational policies, academic and curriculum issues, student discipline problems, and teaching assignments. Teachers interpret exclusion from decision-making as a lack of respect, personally and professionally (p. 4).

Participation in decision making has been found to be related to reduced conflict, higher morale, more positive feelings about school leaders, greater commitment to implementation of changes, more effective enforcement of discipline, and reduced absenteeism. Lack of opportunity to participate is related to stress and burnout (Corcoran et al., 1988). Yet they found that most significant policy decisions were made by administration with little faculty input. This was true of decisions that have traditionally been made by teachers, such as curriculum and teaching strategies. It is important to ensure that real participation does exist. Establishing a procedure for involving teachers does not guarantee that it will occur. Reluctance of teachers, lack of time for collaboration, and resistance from administrators may combine to prevent real participation. Corcoran et al. (1988) say teachers are genuinely participating when there is real intent to use their input; they are consulted regularly, not sporadically and selectively; and the input is respected. It appears that collegiality may be a prerequisite condition for participation.

Individual, Group, or Organizational Incentives

Decisions must be made as to the size of the unit to receive a reward or incentive. Some

programs are clearly limited to individuals while others can be available to groups or to an entire organization.

Individual incentives. When given to individual teachers there is an implicit assumption that schools can be improved by appealing to each teacher to improve practice. If this is possible, then there is an assumption that teachers could teach in a more effective manner and are refusing to do so. Those who view individuals as the best targets for reform fail to understand the complexity of both individual motivation and the school as a culture.

Dunwell (1987) believes that determining what motivates an individual is an incredibly complex process. To complicate matters individuals react differently in different environments and circumstances. A reward that might have incentive value in one circumstance is almost meaningless in another setting.

An individual incentive has the advantage of being a direct reward that is earned entirely by oneself. As such there is no need for collaboration. Others, less motivated, can not keep a teacher from getting the reward. Some programs are based on how an individual performs relative to others (Hatry and Greiner, 1985). This can result in jealously and resentment. When the climate is not supportive others can keep a teacher from enjoying the reward. When this happens the entire school is affected and the reward may lose its value as an incentive. Experience with individual incentives has produced alienation, divisiveness, and lack of cooperation. A review of the literature on merit pay and career ladders produces a long list of problems that can accompany incentive programs for individual teachers. According to Bellon et al. (1988),

> The best teachers may be out of the classroom much of the time. The evaluation system takes more time, must be valid, reliable, and able to discriminate accurately. The focus of evaluation is not on improvement, but on the identification of superior teachers. Systematic evaluation against set criteria may routinize teaching and foster competition. Most career ladders reward a stellar performance, not commitment and solid performance over time (p. 30).

Group incentives. Those who encourage group awards assume that teachers will be more effective if they work together to accomplish high priority goals and that educators derive satisfaction from working with and learning from their peers. This may be especially true when student achievement is more problematical and teachers depend on support from working with

other teachers to maintain a high level of morale.

Group incentives can be given to a number of teachers who work together to accomplish high priority goals of the organization. Some of these incentives are given to an entire school as the result of exceeding expected student test scores. More recently group incentives have been used to encourage participation in some reform effort. When this happens money may be available for developing plans, for staff development, or for making organizational changes necessary to carry out desired reforms (Cornett, 1988).

Group incentives can be intrinsic in nature. Recognition as an outstanding school is one example. Other group incentives may be extrinsic. Some of these involve a salary allocation to be shared among members of the group. A number of programs reward the participants with a sum of money that can be spent for equipment, materials, release time, or training. These rewards are usually based on a set of established criteria. If these criteria are known ahead of time and are important enough to influence teacher behavior, such programs can have a powerful influence.

There are several advantages for offering group incentives. Mitchell et al. (1987) state, "Policies that develop appropriate group-level solidary incentives will also significantly improve teacher work performance" (p. 210). Palaich and Flannelly (1984) point out that the work of teachers is "shared work," not work accomplished solely in individual classrooms. Successful schools are characterized by extensive interaction among members of the staff. It is through interaction that strong school cultural systems are built and commitment to school goals is fostered.

Another advantage of group incentives is the fact that they foster a sense of professionalism. Cellio and Jacobi (1987) conclude,

> . . . collaborative activities are conducive to development of professionalism among teachers. Such activities can strengthen both the common bond of a group and the group's performance. Reward systems that are offered to grade levels or instructional departments can be very important in fostering a team concept and in boosting morale (p. 74).

Attempts to obtain group awards require cooperation. Groups must develop ways to work together to attain and share the award. Care must be taken so that some members of the group do not feel that they must compensate for the lack of effort of others.

Organizational incentives. Those who support organizational level incentives make the assumption that uniform group incentives will improve individual performance. Organizational

level incentives may reward everyone, including non-certificated and central office personnel. Cooperation and sharing are required to acquire and enjoy the award. Extrinsic incentives at the organizational level tend to be formal and impersonal factors, such as increased health insurance benefits. Intrinsic organizational incentives appear to be more influential in changing teacher behavior. Mitchell et al. (1987) found that teachers would modify their behavior in order to be viewed as part of a particularly effective organization. They value the sense of accomplishment that comes from identification with good schools, often driving a long way to work at a school that has a fine reputation.

There may be other incentives for being a part of an effective organization. Schools with poor performance records are being monitored more closely by state departments, while South Carolina is considering proposals that ". . .would release schools with a record of superior academic achievement from compliance with numerous state regulations" (Flax, 1989, p. 1). Freedom from following state mandates on class scheduling, structure, and staffing would give a school staff much more opportunity to make professional decisions at the local level.

Alternative Incentive Findings and Implications

Research on incentives for educators provides clear guidance for those who establish policy and formulate guidelines for program implementation. Those who write about teacher motivation and the incentive power of programs are in strong agreement about the factors that influence teacher behavior. Findings from the literature review and related implications are summarized below. It is clear that locally developed incentive programs provide opportunities that are not available in state mandated activities.

Expanding the role of the local education agency. Alternative incentives should help local education agencies make their own qualitative decisions about improving education at their own sites. In any case, LEAs should identify their own needs, define their own ends, and plan their own programs within their understanding of the local context. These could include development of people, programs, or educational structures.

The most powerful reforms are those that are conceived at the local level in individual schools. Effective performance does not occur through state or national reforms. It comes to pass in individual school systems. " . . . The most vital factors in effective schools are the effort,

commitment, and involvement of their teaching staffs and leaders who understand the importance of creating good conditions for teaching and act on that understanding" (Corcoran et al., 1988).

Developing an integrated approach. Incentive programs should focus on program development, instructional improvement, and professional development. Each of these elements has an interactive effect on the other. Concentrating on an integrated program can overcome the tendency to try for "quick fixes" or to participate as a way to control and distribute rewards. Alternative incentives should be designed to:

a. improve future instruction,
b. encourage longer term improvement,
c. promote cooperation and collaboration, and
d. address high priority school and organizational goals.

Capitalizing on intrinsic incentives. Dunwell (1987) summarizes most of the incentives research when he says, "(t)he most powerful motivational forces for teachers are a complex of intrinsic rewards including knowledge of student success, enhanced self-concept and self-esteem, and continued professional growth" (p. 90).

Alternative incentives programs should provide experiences that promote:

a. improved student achievement;
b. more positive, productive relationships with students;
c. opportunities to work with other professionals on program improvement and development of new skills and knowledge; and
e. stronger school and classroom cultures.

Teachers may need to recognize the effect that student achievement and personal development have on their work satisfaction. Efforts to raise their awareness of activities and programs that can improve their teaching and interaction with students will be necessary. Alternative incentive rewards alone will not improve learning in a school. However, Flannelly and Palaich (1985) believe that rewards that reinforce other changes such as better inservice training and instructional improvement programs can make a difference. Successful programs have leaders who develop a school culture that supports improvement for individuals and groups. Mitchell et al. (1987) stress the importance of school culture.

> In our judgment, the recent educational reforms aimed at improving teaching through the manipulation of salaries and

> other extrinsic rewards are doomed to failure if they are not combined with a clear understanding of the subtle and complex cultural system that sustains teachers in the midst of an emotionally intense and very demanding work environment. Manipulations of rewards which further weaken school and classroom cultures are more likely to contribute to bellicose unions and high rates of teacher burnout and exiting from the profession than to substantially improved school performance (p. 204).

Providing a variety of incentives. A broad range of incentives should be available to encourage:

a. effective staff development and continued professional growth;
b. improved working conditions;
c. participation in planning, making decisions, and setting policy; and
d. opportunities for individuals, groups, and organizations to work together.

Alternative incentives should provide as many options as possible. Each school system has different needs and strengths. Providing the opportunity for creativity in addressing these needs and capitalizing on the strengths is an important consideration. Alternative Incentives offer schools valuable options that are not addressed in other programs.

Conclusion

Tennessee is now aggressively pursuing options regarding its Career Ladder Program. A specific focus is on modifying the Extended Contract Program and on incorporating alternative incentives that may better meet the high priority needs of students, teachers, schools, and school systems.

At least two major challenges face those concerned about improving the educational system. Financial resources are limited so priorities must be established. In addition to current funding problems, a teacher shortage appears to be imminent. While efforts to reform our schools continue, decisions must be made in light of limited resources and the need to maintain a high quality teaching force.

Our study indicates the potential benefits of incentives that provide opportunities for career development and work enlargement, enhance student learning, and improve the overall school culture. Alternative incentive programs can be developed that will meet high priority local needs.

be cost effective, and improve teacher work satisfaction. The incentives can be structured to promote cooperation rather than competition within the school unit or system. Focusing on important personal goals or common goals with other teachers will help direct energy and efforts on meeting high priority student needs and positively affect the professional levels of educators in Tennessee.

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